

FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITES (FUDS)
PROJECT FACT SHEET
ORIGINAL DATE: 23 MAY 1995
TAG REVIEW DATE: 7 MAY 1997

1. SITE NAME: Great Bend Air-to-Ground Gunnery Range

SITE NUMBER: B07KS021800

LOCATION:

City: Great Bend

County: Barton

State: Kansas

PROJECT NUMBER: B07KS021801

CATEGORY: OE

INPR RAC: 3

ASR RAC: 3

TAG RAC: 3

2. POC'S:

GEO DIST POC:

Name: Robert Dworkin

Office: CEMRO-MD-HB

Phone: 402-221-7716

TECHNICAL MANAGER:

Name: Richard L. Pike

Office: CEHND-OE-DC

Phone: 205-895-1559

GEO DIVISION POC:

Name: Roger Hager

Office: CEMRD-ET-HS

Phone: 402-697-2619

HEADQUARTERS POC:

Name: Sara Goodwin

Office: CEMP-RF

Phone: 202-761-8883

SUPPORT DIST (ASR) POC:

Name: Rochelle Ross

Office: CELMS-PM-M

Phone: 314-331-8784

ASR TAG REVIEW POC:

Name: C. Fredrick Girard

Office: SIOAC-ESL

Phone: 815-273-8849

3. SITE DESCRIPTION:

In 1943, the War Department leased 14,663.42 acres in Barton County, 7.5 miles northeast of Great Bend, Kansas, for the Great Bend Air-to-Ground Gunnery Range, which was also known as the Cheyenne Bottoms Ground Gunnery

Range. The northern boundary of the range was the township section line two miles south of Redwing and extended three miles east and west from Redwing. The southwest corner was three miles east of Dent Spur. The range was six miles long (east-west) and four miles wide (north-south) and encompassed sections 14-34 (inclusive) T 18 South and R 12 West and sections 13, 24, 25, and 36 T 18 South and Range 13 West.

4. SITE HISTORY:

a. The air crews used the site as both a machine gun range (possibly a Poorman range) and an air-to-ground gunnery range, and the military reserved the right to use it as a bombing range. Records also indicate that chemical warfare training occurred at the site.

b. The small arms range was located in the southwest corner of the site. Here, troops fired .30 caliber M-1 rifles and .45 caliber Thompson submachine guns. An historical map also placed a Poorman Range in this area where .50 caliber machine guns would have been fired. A bombing target was located in the center of the site. In 1946, a Bomb and Shell Disposal Team (BSDT) uncovered scrap metal from M-38 practice bombs and tail fins and shrapnel from high explosive bombs. Although range personnel never uncovered any records, it was rumored that three 500 lb. bombs were dropped on this range. Also located at this site was an air-to-ground gunnery range. Projectiles and casings from .50 caliber rounds have been found throughout the site. The BSDT found an empty cartridge case from a 20mm cannon, but it is believed that no significant 20mm firing was conducted. Although research did not uncover records relating to 75mm howitzers, approximately 10-15 years ago, a round was found.

c. A portion of the Cheyenne Bottoms area was used for chemical decontamination training. In December 1943, construction began on two buildings for this purpose. Also during this month, the chemical section received 75 lb. of liquid mustard gas for use in decontamination training. The exact location of this training is unknown, so it is not known if this training occurred at the Bottoms. Tear gas pots, chemical land mines, smoke grenades, and incendiary bombs, reportedly, were part of the training.

d. The Cheyenne Bottoms was flooded in the early 1950's. Since then, soil has been moved for the construction of duck blinds, dikes, and other water control structures. The area is mostly water and cat-tails which are burned often.

5. PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Entire Site:	Size, Acres:	14,663.42
--------------	--------------	-----------

Former Usage:	Bombing Target Area, Air to Ground Gunnery Range, Chemical Decontamination training
Present Usage:	Wildlife Area and wetlands
Probable End Usage:	Same as above
Ordnance Presence:	Confirmed
Type:	Small Arms, M38-series Practice Bombs, 20mm cartridge case and 75mm projectiles

6. CURRENT STATUS:

The Archive Search Report for Great Bend Air to ground Gunnery Range was completed by the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Louis District, in April 1995.

7. STRATEGY: Entire Site: EE/CA

8. ISSUES AND CONCERNS:

a. The TAG concurs with the recommendation for an EE/CA for the entire site since the BSDT sweep in 1946, only .50 caliber shell casings and one 75mm howitzer (found in the early 1980's) have been found. Aerial photo interpretation, the site inspection, and interviews did not reveal any disposal areas. The location of the chemical training is unknown. Recommendations include that signs are posted and pamphlets issued identifying the types of ordnance which may be encountered and what to do if they are.

b. There are known Federally-and State-listed species occurring in the site area. An on-site inspection by appropriate State and Federal personnel may be necessary to verify the presence, absence or location of listed species or natural communities.

9. SCHEDULE SUMMARY: EE/CA

[Return to State List index page](#)

[Return to OE Home Page](#)